

the mid-atlantic archivist

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FALL MEETING WITH NEA

PROGRAM ARRANGEMENTS
by
Frances M. Seeber

MARAC's fall meeting on October 19-20, hosted by the New York State Archives in Albany, New York marks one first in a list of firsts.

It will be MARAC's first meeting in New York State. It will be MARAC's first joint meeting with the New England Archivists, Inc. It will be the first time MARAC is opening its meeting with a plenary session for the entire membership. It will be the first meeting at which seminar sessions with position papers are being offered. It will be the first time MARAC will feature a presentation by the Society of American Archivists and the first time the New England Document Conservation Center will give a workshop at a MARAC meeting.

The Ramada Inn of Albany will furnish lodging for the meeting and bus transportation between the Empire State Plaza and the motel will be provided. Three hundred rooms for this joint meeting will be available with a price range of \$26. for a single; \$36. for a twin; \$42. for a triple; and \$44. for a quad. Reservations should be made directly with the motel, and a reservation card will be included with the program mailing. From Thursday evening through Saturday morning members can enjoy the Hospitality Suite compliments of the Ramada Inn.

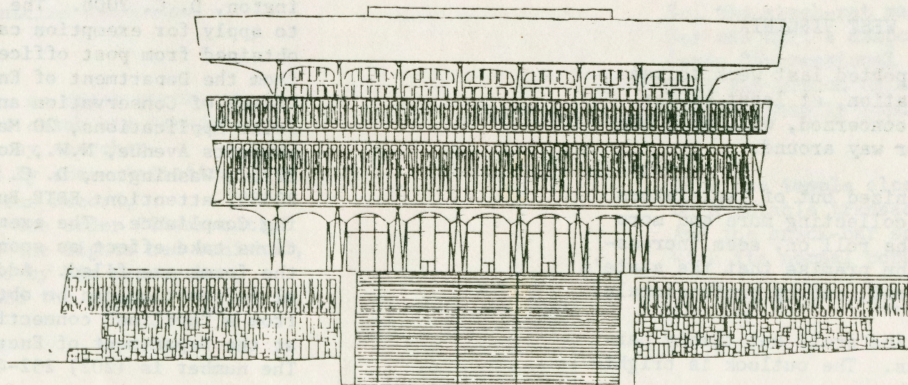
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LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
by
Bruce Dearstyne

Albany, New York, will be the site of this fall's combined meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference and the New England Archivists. New York's capital city is located approximately 150 miles north of New York City and 180 miles west of Boston and can easily be reached by car, bus, train, or airplane. The city is built on hills overlooking the Hudson River where Dutch settlement began over three centuries ago and is one of the oldest cities in the country. It is a city of contrasts, with colonial and Victorian buildings side by side with the ultra-modern Empire State Plaza.

Sessions will be held in the Cultural Education Center, located in the Plaza. Completed in 1978, the Empire State Plaza is a 96 acre government office complex that includes a 44 story tower building, a unique egg-shaped performing arts center, a large collection of modern sculpture and paintings, fountains, shopping, dining facilities, and public parking. The breathtaking architecture of the Plaza has dramatically altered the landscape of Albany and has helped transform it into a modern city offering MARAC members many enjoyable experiences.

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THE NEW YORK STATE CULTURAL CENTER

The mid-atlantic archivist is a quarterly publication of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC). MARAC membership includes all interested individuals who live and work in the seven states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. MARAC seeks to promote the professional welfare of its members, effect cooperation among individuals concerned with the documentation of the human experience; the exchange of information between colleagues working in the immediate regional area; and to improve the professional competence of archivists, curators of textual, and audiovisual, and related special research collections, and records managers; and to encourage professional involvement of persons actively engaged in the preservation and use of all types of historical research materials. Individual membership dues are \$5.00 per annum. The dues year is from October 1 through September 30. Membership is not open to institutions, but institutions may purchase subscriptions to the mid-atlantic archivist for \$5.00 per annum. Write: Martha C. Slotten, MARAC Secretary, Library, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013.



Items submitted for maa should be single-spaced, no indentation, in columns 4 1/2" wide, written on pica type, double-spaced between paragraphs. Send to: Donald F. Harrison, maa editor, National Archives (NNR), Washington, D.C. 20408, Phone: (202) 724-1080.

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IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MARAC MEMBERSHIP!

PLEASE USE THE FORM
SENT BY MARTHA SLOTTEN

FOLLOWUP ON WEST VIRGINIA

A very reliable source reported last week to maa that West Virginia legislation, at least as far as the State Archives is concerned, will be a sunrise rather than the other way around.

The audit committee, organized out of legislators and private citizens, by collecting more and more documentation as the months roll on, seem increasingly welcome to accept the premise that the state's heritage should be preserved, and by professionals.

MARAC should be proud of the small but timely participation in this process. The outlook is brighter than it was three months ago.

TEMPERATURE AND THE ARCHIVES

President Carter's decision to institute a mandatory temperature level in all public buildings as a means of energy conservation has potential adverse affects on archives, museums, research libraries, and historic buildings.

Accordingly, these institutions have been granted the opportunity to apply for exemptions from "Stand-by Conservation Plan No. 2, Emergency Building Temperature Restrictions," which became effective on July 16. Under the plan, thermostats are set at 78°F for cooling, 65°F for heating, and 105°F for hot water.

The regulations were published on July 5 in the Federal Register on pages 39345 - 39369. The exact language of the regulations is as follows:

Section 490.31 General exemptions.

(a)(4) Any other circumstances where special environmental conditions are required to protect plant life essential to the operation of a business within a covered building, material or animal life. (p. 39365)

(a)(6) Where the structure or insulation will be damaged. (p. 39366)

Copies of the regulations are available for 75 cents from the Government Printing Office, 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006. The forms to apply for exemption can be obtained from post offices, or from the Department of Energy, Office of Conservation and Solar Applications, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Room 2221C, Washington, D. C. 20585, attention: EBTR Building Compliance. The exemptions take effect as soon as the forms are filed. Additional information can be obtained from a "hotline" connection at the Department of Energy. The number is (202) 252-4950.

Program Arrangements
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Dr. James E. O'Neill, Acting Archivist of the United States, will give the principal address at the Friday morning session.

The afternoon sessions on Friday will be organized around various archival issues in the areas of business, education, ethnic groups, labor, local public government, religious denominations, science, and women. All eight topics will be discussed twice in consecutive sessions to enable members to attend two seminars of their choice. In advance of the meeting, position papers and discussion questions will be prepared for each area and will be available to the membership at registration. It is hoped that these sessions will be small (approximately 10 persons), with a group leader for each. The Committee is prepared to run at least four concurrent groups in each area; the actual number of concurrent sessions will be contingent on the pre-registration and registration count.

On Saturday, the traditional four track program will be offered. The introductory sessions covering arrangement, description, and reference service will be provided by the Society of American Archivists' workshop, with the New England Documents Conservation Center presenting a program on basic conservation. For the experienced archivist, the career track sessions will cover such topics as: meeting the needs of the genealogist, records of the future, architectural and cartographic records, national data bases for cataloging manuscripts and archives, the arrangement and retrieval of photographs, and financial and fiscal records.

The Committee has been fortunate in obtaining the services of outstanding speakers and panelists for all of these sessions and feels that the membership can look forward to a good, solid archival program with time to take in the sights of Albany, to meet old friends and new, and just to enjoy a few days' change of pace.

So, circle October 19 and 20 on your calendar now. Plan to join your colleagues from the tip of Maine to West Virginia and come to Albany -- for some of you, it may also be a first!

Marshall Lee, Bookmaking: The Illustrated Guide to Design/Production/Editing. Second Edition, R.R. Bowker, 1979.

This completely revised edition reflects the changes in the book design and production in the last two decades. The work is divided into three parts: Design and Production, Editing, and Useful Information. Topics covered include composition, typography, illustration, printing, binding, editing procedures, proof-reading, and bibliographic and film sources.

Local Arrangements
Continued from page 1

The Cultural Education Center, facing the State Capitol across the expanse of the Plaza, contains the State Archives, State Library, State Museum, and several other offices of the New York State Education Department. Meeting participants will gather in the Center's modern auditorium and meeting rooms that are well suited to both Friday's group discussions and Saturday's larger sessions. Convenient to the meetings are cafeterias, restaurants, museums, shops, and historical sites that present pleasant diversions from serious conference sessions. The residential area adjacent to the Cultural Education Center is undergoing significant rehabilitation and you will discover architectural treasures among these century-old buildings.

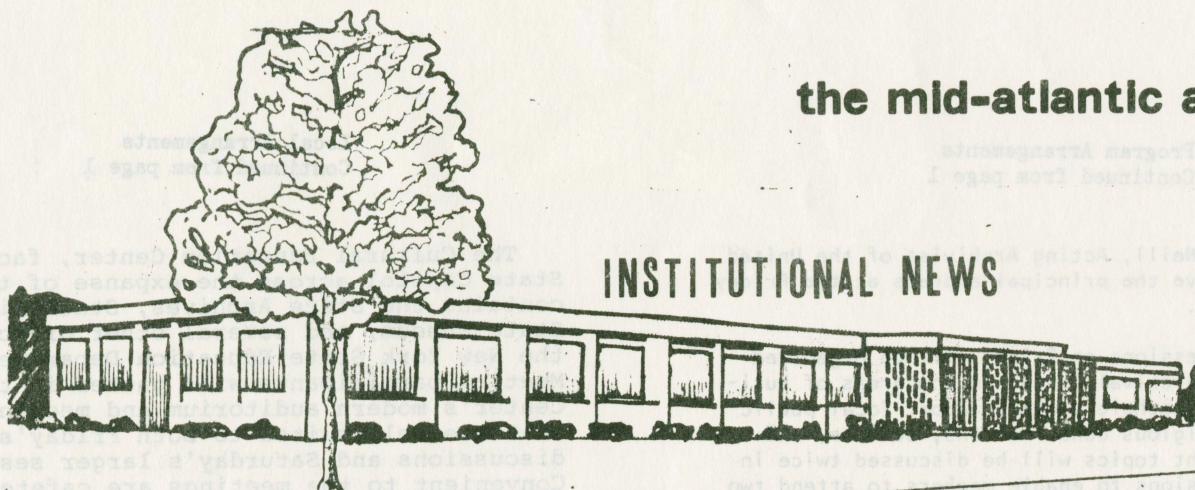
MARAC/NEA members will stay at the Ramada Inn, located on Western Avenue. The motel is approximately 4 miles from the meeting and can be reached either by private car or busses provided for the conference. Additional information and reservation forms for motel accommodations will be included in the registration packet.

Highlights of the meeting will include a wine and cheese reception Friday evening, a box lunch on Saturday, tours of the State Archives and State Library, and a tour of historic Albany sites on Saturday afternoon. On Friday night, you can enjoy the varied cultural activities in the Albany area including music, theater, film, and dance. A number of fine restaurants and nightspots are located a short distance from the motel and meeting site. For those able to extend their visit to the area, there are a number of nearby attractions such as Saratoga, Cooperstown, Lake George, Lake Placid, as well as further points of interest in New York and New England. More information on area attractions and all details concerning local arrangements will be included in registration information that will be mailed to MARAC members early in September.

The MARAC/NEA local arrangements committee offers a warm invitation to you to come to Albany. Enjoy the enlightening sessions, the informal discussions, the vivid fall colors, and the sights and sounds of Albany. We look forward to seeing you on October 19th.

Albert R. Materazzi, Archival Stability of Microform -- A Technical Review. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1978.

This helpful booklet discusses the the characteristics of different types of microfilm, their resistance to wear, and life expectancy. Materazzi concludes that both silver halide and diazo fiche have a usable life of more than 100 years.



INSTITUTIONAL NEWS

Several New Jersey institutions, including the NEW JERSEY STATE MUSEUM, NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL COMMISSION, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, and the NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY, the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, and the SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY are co-sponsoring a "Thomas A. Edison and the Recent History of Science and Technology: A Commemorative Symposium," October 19-20, 1979, at the Hotel Robert Trent, Newark, New Jersey. For further information contact:

Edison Symposium
New Jersey Historical Commission
113 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

The CONSERVATION CENTER for ART and HISTORIC ARTIFACTS in Philadelphia has received a grant of \$100,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in support of the Center's activity for a three-year period. The grant is primarily for operating expenses during the Center's formative years.

FUTURE MEETING SITES

Fall 1979 -- Albany, New York
Spring 1980 -- Washington, DC
Fall 1980 -- undetermined
Spring 1981 -- Pittsburgh, Penna.

The SOCIETY of ALABAMA ARCHIVISTS has submitted a grant to compile, produce, and distribute a guide to archival and manuscript repositories in the state of Alabama. The grant proposal has been submitted to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for funding.

The American Film Institute, through an NEA grant, annually grants funds on a matching basis to non-profit tax-exempt organizations for the preservation of nitrate-base film. Contact:

American Film Institute
John F. Kennedy Center for the
Performing Arts
Washington, DC 20566

NEW DATES FOR GOING TO THE SOURCE

The National Archives has changed the dates for Going to the Source: An Introduction to Research in Archives. The new dates are November 13-16, 1979. Contact:

Elsie Freivogel
NARS (NE)
Washington, DC 20408

THE BALLAD OF READING JAIL

In the land of Uncle Sammy
By the somnolent Potomac
Is a temple made of marble --
Marble, lime, and green-hued iron.
Quite conveniently located
Near the downtown shopping center,
Hard by Hecht's and close to Apex,
Not too far from Murphy's basement,
Stands this temple where are sheltered
Tons of paper, films, and objects,
Which, when properly assembled,
Tell of Sammy's life and actions,
Of his greatness and his weakness,
How he grew from babe to adult,
How he daily battles Mammon
And assorted types of vices.

In the temple dwell the high priests,
Chiefs of branches, and the stack-rats,
In a three-way matrimony
That oft borders on the frantic.
"Past is Prologue," chant the high priests;
"Deadlines!" scream the chiefs of branches;
But the stack-rats gaily chorus
"Coffee-break!" and "When's our next raise?"

To the temple come those mortals
Whose investigations lead them
To examine Sammy's papers.
Then the stack-rats must encounter,
Aid, and sometimes even suffer.
But some scrolls are of such moment,
Confidential or top-secret
Or restricted or top-sacred,
Double-shelved or else just missing,
That the branch chiefs and the stack-rats
And especially the high priests
Guard them with a wall of wordage:
"Classified" and "They're not public."

When they cease their daily labors,
But before their nightly revels,
Designated worthy stack-rats
Are obliged to lock the temple,
Making sure that all their colleagues
And the searchers of the papers
Have departed from the alcoves
And the labyrinthine sections.

But, one night, an eager stack-rat,
In his haste to catch his car-pool,
Overlooked a busy searcher,
Who, entranced by some statistics
On a faded census record,
Failed to hear the order "Clear out!",
Failed to note the lights had vanished,
And overwhelmed by his researches,
Fell asleep upon the papers.

When the temple was reopened
And the searcher was discovered
Still inert among the records,
His grim presence gave occasion
For a host of records problems:
Provenance and attribution
To which bureau and agency
Of this newly-found attachment
To the population schedules?

Roared the high priests and the branch chiefs
"Make appraisals, write endorsements.
Call the Census records people,
Fill the dossiers, make a shelflist,
Sixty-seven tens and ten-A's,
Metric measurements and all that.
Let the chemists in the basement
And the photo-lab get busy
With their art of lamination
And their art of duplication
For enduring preservation
And prepare the new accession
For indefinite retention!"

But the careless, hasty stack-rat,
Conscience-stricken and repentant,
Sought to liberate the searcher.
So, he roused the luckless student,
Questioned him about his background,
Found that he was born in 'Frisco
In the early 1900's.

Next the stack-rat took the Handbook,
Which is gospel in the temple,
Found the chapter, verse, and section
That would serve his urgent purpose,
And proclaimed throughout the temple
That the searcher was non-record:
"The Great Fire burned all his papers
That could demonstrate his being -
Birth certificates, baptismal,
Even early schooling records.
So, he's marked for disposition
And exclusion from the temple.

So, the stack-rat made a job-sheet
For one unit's disposition
(sans Congressional permission)
That the branch chief soon recorded
And delightedly reported.

Thus the temple closed its action
On a notable transaction
And the snack-bar soon was cluttered
With its normal population.

-- Jerome Finster

The following reprinted from the Iowa Historical Materials Preservation Society Newsletter is from the February 1979 issue of Archives Bulletin:

10 WAYS TO TORPEDO YOUR ASSOCIATION

1. Take out a membership, but don't get involved.
2. If you do get involved, remain uncommitted.
3. Look for any excuse to avoid further commitment.
4. If you attend a meeting, be sure you find fault with the officers and committee members and never look interested in the proceedings.
5. Never accept an office -- it is so much easier to criticize than to put out effort.
6. Nevertheless, feel hurt if you are not elected or appointed or elected to committees. If you are elected, don't take an active part in committee activities.
7. If asked for your opinion on some matter, say you have nothing to say. Afterwards tell everybody how things ought to have been done.
8. Do nothing more than necessary, but when other members roll up their sleeves and willingly, unselfishly use their ability to help get a project going, tell everyone that the Association is run by a clique.
9. Hold back your dues as long as possible. Better yet -- just don't pay at all.
10. Don't bother about getting new members. Let someone else do it.

Martha Slotten
Secretary, MARAC
Dickinson College Library
Carlisle, PA 17012

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Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference

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mid-atlantic archivist

107 Rockglen Road
Overbrook Hills, PA 19151
August 30, 1979

Admiral Rowland G. Freeman III
Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Admiral Freeman:

We are writing to urge the appointment of a highly qualified and respected professional as Archivist of the United States. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, representing over 500 members from both private and public institutions, has an obvious interest in the future of the National Archives and Records Service.

Because of its size, NARS has been a leader in our field in the past and should continue to be so in the future. As you probably know, the National Archives was instrumental in bringing archival practice to the United States, training archivists at the Federal, state, and local levels, and in introducing records management.

The integrity of the National Archives and Records Service must be preserved. We hope that the emphasis recently placed on proper preservation and sound management will improve NARS. We also hope that the outcome of the present problems will serve to increase its fine record of service to the public as well as to government agencies.

The position of Archivist of the United States is specialized because it combines the functions of paperwork management with those of a cultural institution. The goal of the archivist is to properly preserve and reference the 2% of papers worth preserving while streamlining and reducing costs for the other 98%. A professional who has experience with records and espouses basic archival principles will understand the various functions of current files, semi-permanent records and archival records and make them work together. In addition, records that are worth keeping become part of the heritage of every citizen; the Archivist must have a sense of history in order to ensure the availability and care that this responsibility entails.

We would be happy to comment on possible candidates or be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Mary Elizabeth Ruwell
Mary Elizabeth Ruwell

Chairperson, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference